

## 2. Sociocultural Context

Between 1880 and 1940, Delaware's rural population grew from 97,619 to 127,073, an increase of 23% (Table 62). Only between 1910 and 1920 did it decline in size, by 3%, despite a greater than 10% increase in the total population. At the beginning of the period, in 1880, 17,849 of the state's residents were employed in agriculture. Almost 99% were older boys and men; more than 1,600 were boys aged 10 to 15 (9%), and more than 1,600 others were men over the age of 60 (9%). Ninety-seven percent had been born in the United States; the few immigrants came mostly from Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. These agricultural workers were distributed almost evenly between "Agricultural Laborers" and "Farmers and Planters." Over 1,400 of the men over 60 owned their own farms, however, while only 242 of them labored on others' farms.

At the beginning of this period, then, roughly one-half of Delaware's agricultural workers did not own their own farms. While the inclusion of farm owners' sons and other family members inflates the figure, tenancy and employment as farm laborers was obviously a central feature of the sociocultural context of agriculture in the state. It remained so throughout the period. Writing in 1933, Bausman provides us with the following summary overview of the "economic and historic background of farm tenancy in Delaware:"

At the present time farm labor in Delaware is predominantly colored. The farmers are predominantly white. Until about 1900, the labor situation was quite satisfactory to the Delaware farmers. Labor was so plentiful and cheap that little thought was given to economy in its use. There developed a class of farm owners who not only did little labor themselves, but required that the hired labor render them many personal services...

About 1900, farm conditions took a different turn. Farm profits became unsatisfactory... Moreover, the labor situation was becoming more and more unsatisfactory. Farm labor was becoming more scarce, and the laborer was less responsive to the farmer's wishes. This was distinctly annoying to many of the farm owners who had farmed during a period of comparative ease, despite the low general price level. As they had accumulated enough wealth so that they could live from the rents of their farms, many of them reasoned that it was unnecessary for them to contend with these unsatisfactory farm conditions, consequently they rented their farms to tenants and moved to town. This was a satisfactory arrangement for the farm owner because there were enough good tenants to meet the demand.

TABLE 62  
DELAWARE'S RURAL POPULATION 1880-1940  
(source: U.S. Bureau of Census 1943: 895)

CENSUS YEAR	THE STATE		RURAL TERRITORY			PERCENT OF TOTAL	
	Population	Increase over preceding census	Population	Increase over preceding census		Urban	Rural
				Number	Percent		
1940.....	266,503	29,125	127,073	11,631	10.3	32.3	47.7
1930.....	239,390	15,377	115,254	12,998	12.7	31.7	49.3
1920.....	223,008	50,461	102,256	-3,001	-2.9	34.2	49.8
1910.....	202,322	17,587	105,237	6,211	5.9	32.0	52.0
1900.....	184,735	16,242	99,018	1,591	1.5	46.0	53.6
1890.....	168,493	21,683	97,626	-131	-0.2	42.2	57.8
1880.....	146,608	21,593	97,619	3,445	3.7	33.4	66.6

Prior to 1920, conditions for the landlord continued to improve. There was an abundance of good tenants... Many of the landlords were content to depend, for the most part, on the incomes of their farms for a livelihood.

Inheritance had become the most important factor influencing farm ownership. Many of the farms had come into the possession of the third and fourth generations of the family...

However, since the beginning of the present agricultural depression in 1920 the landlord's attitude toward farm ownership has changed. There has become a distinct scarcity of good tenants. This is due, in part, to the tenant's opportunity for alternative employment during the past several years because of Delaware's close proximity to eastern industrial centers. The keeping of a good tenant has become an acute problem for the landlord...

The prices of farm products have been declining and rents are low. Because many landlords have little hope of appreciable recovery in rents in the near future, they are pricing land at rental values. This has made land values attractive to the tenant.

On the other hand, some tenants reason that if they owned the farms they could make them produce better returns than they do under tenant operation... Some tenants, therefore, will reason that if necessary they could afford to pay a price which is a little above the rental value of the farms as now operated. This is what the better tenants are doing...

Farm land, therefore, has become a less satisfactory investment for the landlord. This attitude on the part of the landlord has been hastened by the fact that many of them have deferred making repairs to buildings in the hope that either rents would improve or the expense of building repairs would be reduced. These repairs now can be deferred no longer, and many landlords are forced to make extensive building repairs and even extension of buildings... Many landlord families who are dependent on their farms for their sole source of income have been forced to reduce their standard of living (Bausman 1933: 165-166; see also Siders et al. 1991: 48-63, 71-83, although their emphasis is on the period before 1880).

While the attitudes Bausman described as prevailing among farm owners and landlords, tenants, and laborers between 1880 and the 1930s cannot be confirmed by the research undertaken in preparing this historic context, other social and cultural aspects of farm tenancy and ownership have been illuminated.

In 1880, according to U. S. census figures, 60% of New Castle County's farms and 53% of Kent County's farms were cultivated by their owners (Table 63). Another 28% in New Castle and 41% in Kent were rented for shares of the produce; the rest owners rented for a fixed amount in cash. In both counties, most of the owner-occupied farms contained between 50 and 500 acres. The sharecropped farms in New Castle, however, were overwhelmingly in the 100-500 acre category, while in Kent the cash rent tenant farms were more evenly distributed in size, between 10 and 500 acres.

The published census reports offer little more information on Delaware's farmers and agricultural workers at the beginning of this period. Garcia's work with the 1880 Census of Population for North and South Murderkill hundreds has, however, provided a picture of the structure of their households, racial and national backgrounds, and geographical distribution. Only 6% of the hundreds' farmers were African Americans or "mulattos;" these 30 individuals and their families did not live in a geographically distinct community, but rather spread across the hundreds. Although only 19 of Murderkill's farmers described themselves as retired (4%), the average age of the hundreds' farmers was between 55 and 65. The retired farmers clustered in Camden; Felton, about six miles to the south along the railroad, housed the hundred's youngest farming community, with most of the farmers' aged between 30 and 40. Just over one-quarter of the farm households included non-kin members; the average number of non-kin present was 1.68. Finally, the census provides information on residents' birthplace. Almost 75% of North and South Murderkill's farmers had been born and raised in Delaware. Another 15% moved to Delaware from other states, mostly Pennsylvania and Maryland. Few immigrated from outside the country, primarily from Ireland and Canada (Garcia 1992).

A decade later, Delaware's farm owners and tenants remained overwhelmingly native born. Only 4% had immigrated (in order from most to least) from Ireland, England and Wales, Germany, Canada, Scotland, France, Italy, and the Scandinavian countries. That 87% of these immigrants were natives of Ireland, England, Wales, and Germany meant little ethnic diversity continued to characterize the state's farming population. Neither were these immigrants denied access to farm ownership; the proportions of immigrant farm owners and tenants paralleled their representation in the farming population (U. S. Bureau of the Census 1896: 590).

The published census reports for 1900 do not include information on the national origin of Delaware's farmers and farm workers. They do, however, report on the tenure of New Castle and Kent counties' farms by European Americans and African Americans (Table 64). In addition to "owners," "cash tenants," and "share tenants," the categories employed in the 1880 census, in 1900 "part owners," "owners and tenants," and "managers" are distinguished. The proportion of owner-operated farms had declined in both

TABLE 63

TENURE OF FARMS, BY RACE, NEW CASTLE AND KENT COUNTIES, 1880  
(Source: U. S. Bureau of Census 1883: 38-39)

## CLASSIFICATION ACCORDING TO TENURE.

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Counties	Class I.—Cultivated by owner.										Class II.—Rented for fixed money rental.										Class III.—Rented for shares of products.									
	Total of Class I.	Under 5 acres.	5 and under 10.	10 and under 20.	20 and under 50.	50 and under 100.	100 and under 500.	500 and under 1000.	1000 and over.	Total of Class II.	Under 3 acres.	3 and under 10.	10 and under 20.	20 and under 50.	50 and under 100.	100 and under 500.	500 and under 1000.	1000 and over.	Total of Class III.	Under 3 acres.	3 and under 10.	10 and under 20.	20 and under 50.	50 and under 100.	100 and under 500.	500 and under 1000.	1000 and over.			
The State .....	5,041	8	248	870	790	1,225	2,411	82	5	511	.....	87	73	90	124	163	8	1	3,107	1	84	86	310	672	2,037	81	1			
Kent .....	1,818	.....	89	78	215	510	654	12	1	134	.....	6	25	27	80	43	8	1	1,020	.....	10	29	93	205	873	16	1			
New Castle .....	1,220	2	94	116	206	513	485	6	1	271	.....	18	85	46	67	103	.....	.....	570	.....	4	10	31	72	447	6	1			



counties, by 16% in New Castle County and by 14% in Kent County. In Kent by 1900 more than one-half of the farms were operated by share tenants, along with almost one-third of New Castle's farms. Cash tenancy retained some importance only in New Castle, where one-fifth of the farms were rented for fixed rates. More of Kent County's (11.7%) than of New Castle County's (3.5%) farms were owned or operated by African Americans, although the numbers were negligible in both counties. However, more of New Castle County's African American farmers owned their own farms (49%, compared to 37.5% in Kent).

By 1910, 120 more farms existed in New Castle County, and 306 more had been formed in Kent. About one-half of the farms were operated by their owners in both counties (Table 65). In New Castle County, African Americans owned only 61, 5% of them. African Americans owned twice this proportion of Kent County's farms. Immigrants also owned a larger proportion of the owner-occupied farms in Kent (10%) than in New Castle (8.5%). Twice the number of immigrants rented New Castle farms as rented farms in Kent County, although the numbers were small in both cases. In contrast, African Americans rented more than five times the number of farms in Kent County than they did in New Castle. In both counties, nevertheless, the farm tenants were predominantly European American. Sharecropping remained the primary tenant arrangement; in Kent County, over three-quarters of the tenanted farms were rented under such an agreement. In New Castle, the figure was just over one-half, and another one-third were rented for a fixed rate. Fixed cash rentals continued to increase in popularity in Delaware's northern county.

A decade later, about one-half of New Castle's and Kent's farms remained owner-operated (Table 66). Twenty-four African Americans in New Castle County lost their farms during the 1910s, so that by 1920 they owned only 4% of the county's farms. Thirty-six African Americans in Kent County lost their farms during the same period; they retained ownership of only 7.7% of the county's farms by 1920. Foreign born farm owners retained about the same proportion of the counties' farms as in 1910, and very few rented farms. African American tenants remained considerably more numerous in Kent County than in New Castle, yet even in the southern county they rented only 13% of the county's tenant farms. Sharecropping increasingly dominated tenancy arrangements in Kent County, as over 86% of the tenant farms were rented under cropping agreements. In New Castle, the proportion was under two-thirds, and almost one-third were rented at a fixed cash rate.

Published data and reports yield a more complete sociocultural portrait of New Castle and Kent counties' agricultural communities for the last decade of this study period than for any other. The census reports detail many features of the farming population,

TABLE 65

FARMS AND FARM VALUE, BY TENURE AND ETHNICITY,  
NEW CASTLE AND KENT COUNTIES, 1910  
(Source: U.S. Bureau of Census 1913: 267)

	THE STATE.			Kent.	New Castle.
	Total.	White.	Colored.		
<b>FARMS OPERATED BY OWNERS</b>					
Number of farms .....	6,178	5,772	406	1,548	1,142
Number of farms in 1900 .....	4,680	4,543	352	1,147	842
Per cent of all farms.....	57.0	58.2	44.0	49.6	41.7
Per cent of all farms in 1900.....	48.5	49.0	40.6	40.8	45.1
Land in farms.....	476,827	463,212	13,615	123,139	83,370
Improved land in farms.....	322,077	312,801	9,274	89,241	61,000
Value of land and buildings.....	27,175,067	26,627,516	547,551	6,440,216	9,932,125
Degree of ownership:					
Farms consisting of owned land only.....	5,865	5,518	347	1,503	1,105
Farms consisting of owned and hired land.....	313	251	59	45	37
Color and nativity of owners:					
Native white.....	5,448	5,448	.....	1,221	984
Foreign-born white.....	324	321	.....	164	97
Native and other nonwhite.....	406	.....	406	163	61
Negro and other nonwhite.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
<b>FARMS OPERATED BY TENANTS</b>					
Number of farms.....	4,535	4,035	500	1,522	1,006
Number of farms in 1900.....	4,276	4,206	471	1,640	1,077
Per cent of all farms.....	41.9	40.7	54.1	48.8	45.6
Per cent of all farms in 1900.....	60.5	49.7	67.1	58.3	51.6
Land in farms.....	540,875	499,912	40,963	200,714	143,113
Improved land in farms.....	373,874	348,106	25,768	140,545	114,770
Value of land and buildings.....	24,204,036	22,916,271	1,288,365	8,071,811	9,737,545
Form of tenancy:					
Share tenants.....	3,622	3,201	421	1,193	588
Share-cash tenants.....	47	43	4	10	13
Cash tenants.....	619	564	55	149	353
Tenure not specified.....	247	227	20	108	50
Color and nativity of tenants:					
Native white.....	3,956	3,956	.....	1,318	925
Foreign-born white.....	79	79	.....	24	43
Native and other nonwhite.....	500	.....	500	180	33
Negro and other nonwhite.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
<b>FARMS OPERATED BY MANAGERS</b>					
Number of farms.....	123	107	16	50	60
Number of farms in 1900.....	151	116	15	69	69
Land in farms.....	21,164	18,719	2,395	11,412	7,940
Improved land in farms.....	17,587	15,553	2,034	9,325	6,475
Value of land and buildings.....	1,776,280	1,630,490	145,900	573,480	1,060,300



TABLE 66

FARMS AND FARM VALUE, BY TENURE AND ETHNICITY,  
NEW CASTLE AND KENT COUNTIES, 1920  
(Source: U.S. Bureau of Census 1922: 106)

	Total	Kent.	New Castle
<b>ALL FARMS.</b>			
Number of farms, 1920.....	10,140	2,911	1,825
1910.....	10,836	3,120	2,208
1900.....	9,687	2,814	2,088
<b>FARMS OPERATED BY OWNERS.</b>			
Number of farms, 1920.....	6,010	1,578	915
1910.....	6,178	1,548	1,142
1900.....	4,680	1,147	942
Percent of all farms, 1920.....	59.3	54.2	50.1
Land in farms, 1920..... acres.....	451,476	124,612	72,957
Improved land in farms, 1920..... acres.....	208,219	94,107	62,223
Value of land and buildings, 1920..... dollars.....	30,640,497	10,015,422	8,078,320
Degree of ownership, 1920:			
Farmers owning entire farm..... number.....	5,688	1,827	882
Farmers hiring additional land..... number.....	322	51	33
Color and nativity of owners, 1920:			
Native white owners..... number.....	5,354	1,270	807
Foreign-born white owners..... number.....	321	181	71
Negro and other nonwhite owners..... number.....	355	127	37
<b>FARMS OPERATED BY MANAGERS.</b>			
Number of farms, 1920.....	144	22	70
1910.....	123	80	60
1900.....	131	27	69
Land in farms, 1920..... acres.....	21,488	4,438	10,168
Improved land in farms, 1920..... acres.....	16,544	3,320	7,091
Value of land and buildings, 1920..... dollars.....	3,230,767	512,700	1,948,967
<b>FARMS OPERATED BY TENANTS.</b>			
Number of farms, 1920.....	3,986	1,311	840
1910.....	4,635	1,522	1,006
1900.....	4,876	1,640	1,077
Percent of all farms, 1920.....	39.3	45.8	46.0
Land in farms, 1920..... acres.....	471,550	178,080	122,712
Improved land in farms, 1920..... acres.....	334,289	128,559	102,978
Value of land and buildings, 1920..... dollars.....	30,878,367	11,668,516	11,253,530
Form of tenancy, 1920:			
Share tenants..... number.....	3,106	1,137	521
Croppers..... number.....	208	42	36
Share-cash tenants..... number.....	11	3	5
Cash tenants..... number.....	462	98	264
Standing renters..... number.....	21	1	1
Unspecified..... number.....	177	30	12
Color and nativity of tenants, 1920:			
Native white tenants..... number.....	3,448	1,114	700
Foreign-born white tenants..... number.....	36	19	13
Negro and other nonwhite tenants..... number.....	504	178	37

although only at the geographic level of the county. In addition, Bausman conducted his studies of New Castle and Kent counties' farms and farmers in the middle 1930s.

In 1930, New Castle's "rural-farm" population consisted of almost 10,500 individuals, and Kent's over 13,500 (Table 67). Wilmington at this date, in contrast, housed more than 106,000 inhabitants. The proportions of the two counties' native born, foreign born, and African American agriculturalists varied. In New Castle, African Americans accounted for 8% of the farm population, immigrants only another 5%. Nineteen percent of Kent's "rural-farm" population that year were African Americans, only 3.5% immigrants. In both counties, families were prolific. Almost 40% of New Castle's "rural-farm" population were aged under 19; the figure was 44% in Kent County. Both counties, however, also contained a substantial population of unmarried male farm workers. Two-thirds of the unmarried people over 20 in Kent's farm population were men, and in New Castle the proportion was almost as high (64%).

By 1930, the two counties diverged in their patterns of agricultural labor as well. In New Castle County, just over one-third of the inhabitants engaged in agriculture owned or tenanted farms (37%), while 60% earned their living from wage work on others' farms (Table 68). In Kent, more than one-half of the agriculturalists owned or tenanted farms (54%), and a correspondingly smaller proportion (45%) worked for wages. Further, although women owned or tenanted farms in about equal numbers in the two counties, female farm wageworkers were more than three times as numerous in Kent County. Finally, while just over one-quarter (26%) of the African American agriculturalists in Kent County owned or tenanted farms, in New Castle 92% labored for wages on others' farms.

In the decade between 1920 and 1930, tenancy was on the decline in both counties (39% in New Castle, 40% in Kent) (Table 69). Tenancy did not serve principally as a means for families to establish their children on the family farm as a prelude to full ownership upon the retirement or death of the parents. In both counties, only just over one-tenth of the tenants were related to the owner of the farm they rented. Moreover, as noted above, wageworkers were an important source of farm labor in both counties, and unpaid family workers composed small proportions of the labor forces (Table 68). Sharecropping, which had been the arrangement of choice in Kent County for several decades, was replaced by a different, unspecified contractual relation between 1920 and 1930 (for 89% of the tenants). The same occurred in New Castle, although there almost one-third of the tenants continued to rent for a fixed rate.

TABLE 67

FARM POPULATION, NEW CASTLE AND KENT COUNTIES, 1930  
(Source: U.S. Bureau of Census 1932: 379)

SUBJECT	THE STATE	Kent	New Castle
<b>RURAL-FARM</b>			
<b>SEX, COLOR, ETC.</b>			
Total rural-farm population.....	48,302	13,610	10,418
Male.....	24,702	7,330	5,661
Female.....	21,600	6,280	4,757
Native white.....	38,293	10,538	9,003
Native parentage.....	36,089	9,786	7,923
Foreign or mixed parentage.....	2,204	732	1,080
Foreign-born white.....	1,248	473	558
Negro.....	6,755	2,599	851
Other races.....	6		6
<b>CITIZENSHIP</b>			
Males 21 years old and over.....	13,992	4,026	3,383
Native white.....	11,415	3,041	2,757
Foreign-born white.....	632	240	283
Naturalized.....	423	168	172
Negro.....	1,941	745	339
Females 21 years old and over.....	12,027	3,380	2,803
Native white.....	10,012	2,591	2,356
Foreign-born white.....	568	215	251
Naturalized.....	338	141	122
Negro.....	1,446	574	195
<b>AGE, ETC.</b>			
Under 5 years.....	4,114	1,280	831
Under 1 year.....	788	238	170
5 to 9 years.....	5,048	1,533	1,078
10 to 14 years.....	5,391	1,634	1,095
15 to 19 years.....	4,914	1,465	1,040
20 to 24 years.....	3,444	977	878
25 to 29 years.....	2,618	754	653
30 to 34 years.....	2,669	733	657
35 to 44 years.....	5,816	1,651	1,346
45 to 54 years.....	5,363	1,569	1,187
55 to 64 years.....	3,747	1,023	937
65 to 74 years.....	2,336	663	519
75 years and over.....	830	236	197
Total 10 years old and over.....	37,140	10,791	8,509
Number illiterate.....	1,767	601	289
Per cent illiterate.....	4.8	5.6	3.4
Males 15 years old and over.....	17,148	4,992	4,082
Single.....	5,984	1,784	1,668
Married.....	10,130	2,888	2,149
Females 15 years old and over.....	14,601	4,115	3,332
Single.....	3,424	928	948
Married.....	10,012	2,867	2,102

TABLE 68  
 AGRICULTURAL WORKERS, NEW CASTLE AND KENT COUNTIES, 1930  
 (Source: U.S. Bureau of Census 1932, 1931)

INDUSTRY GROUP	THE STATE			KENT COUNTY		NEW CASTLE COUNTY	
	Total	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
ALL GAINFUL WORKERS							
Agriculture.....	17,341	10,753	588	4,978	145	4,078	88
Farmers (owners and tenants).....	9,141	5,871	270	2,706	63	1,504	58
Farm managers and foremen.....	177	171	6	40	3	89	3
Farm laborers.....	7,988	7,883	305	2,227	78	2,467	21
Wage workers.....	6,693	6,522	171	1,784	63	2,317	21
Unpaid family workers.....	1,295	1,161	134	443	15	150	3
NEGRO GAINFUL WORKERS							
Agriculture.....	3,659	3,536	123	1,262	28	836	14
Farmers (owners and tenants).....	808	784	24	323	10	57	3
Farm managers and foremen.....	8	8	2	2	1	3	1
Farm laborers.....	2,841	2,742	99	535	18	774	11
Wage workers.....	2,602	2,583	79	873	16	769	10
Unpaid family workers.....	179	159	20	62	2	8	1

**TABLE 69**  
**FARM TENURE, NEW CASTLE AND KENT COUNTIES, 1930**  
(Sources: U.S. Bureau of Census 1932: 119, 129)

ITEM				THE STATE	Kent	New Castle
<b>LAND OWNED AND RENTED BY PART OWNERS, 1930</b>						
All land in farms operated by part owners	acres			33,374	9,187	4,490
	White operators	acres		33,643	8,979	4,490
	Colored operators	acres		2,731	208	
Owned and operated by part owners	acres			23,234	5,703	2,081
Rented and operated by part owners	acres			15,090	3,424	2,429
<b>TENANCY</b>						
Proportion of tenancy	1930	per cent		33.8	40.4	32.6
	1925	per cent		35.8	40.8	41.2
	1920	per cent		39.3	45.0	46.0
<b>TENANTS RELATED TO LANDLORD AND CASH RENT PAID, 1930</b>						
All tenants	number			3,282	1,160	710
Tenants related to landlord	number			444	135	88
Proportion of all tenants	per cent			13.5	11.6	12.4
Cash tenants	number			494	130	239
Cash tenants related to landlord	number			71	14	32
Proportion of all cash tenants	per cent			14.4	10.8	13.4
Cash tenants reporting amount of rent	number			491	130	239
Related to landlord	number			70	14	32
	land in farms	acres		4,638	786	2,455
	rent per year, total	dollars		20,880	2,783	14,327
	average rent per farm	dollars		208	199	448
	average rent per acre	dollars		4.60	3.54	5.84
Not related to landlord	number			309	78	166
	land in farms	acres		22,592	5,290	13,988
	rent per year, total	dollars		91,714	13,327	70,666
	average rent per farm	dollars		207	178	426
	average rent per acre	dollars		4.06	2.58	5.05
Relationship not reported	number			112	40	41
All other tenants	number			2,738	1,030	471
Other tenants related to landlord	number			373	121	56
Proportion of all other tenants	per cent			13.4	11.7	11.9
Farm operators, total	1930	number		9,707	2,574	1,839
	1925	number		10,257	3,043	1,967
Full owners	White	1930	number	5,507	1,468	986
		1925	number	5,965	1,007	1,048
	Colored	1930	number	308	129	48
		1925	number	334	138	51
Part owners	White	1930	number	380	65	40
		1925	number	168	22	20
	Colored	1930	number	64	10	
		1925	number	28	6	5
Managers	White	1930	number	146	32	80
		1925	number	64	20	31
	Colored	1930	number	19	10	6
		1925	number	10	8	1
Tenants	White	1930	number	2,867	981	688
		1925	number	3,209	1,051	786
	Colored	1930	number	415	179	22
		1925	number	459	191	25
Cash tenants	White	1930	number	440	98	232
		1925	number	402	72	224
	Colored	1930	number	54	32	7
		1925	number	39	18	9
Croppers	White	1930	number	165	32	23
		1925	number	80	17	18
	Colored	1930	number	60	17	1
		1925	number	61	11	1
Other tenants	White	1930	number	2,262	851	431
		1925	number	2,727	982	644
	Colored	1930	number	301	130	14
		1925	number	359	162	18
All land in farms, total	1930	acres		900,815	302,006	207,323
	1925	acres		899,641	300,576	211,008
Full owners	White	1930	acres	431,061	127,439	78,982
		1925	acres	440,450	129,404	80,839
	Colored	1930	acres	11,050	3,665	1,774
		1925	acres	11,255	4,871	1,143
Part owners	White	1930	acres	35,643	8,979	4,490
		1925	acres	12,819	2,581	2,443
	Colored	1930	acres	2,731	208	
		1925	acres	805	119	206
Managers	White	1930	acres	26,122	7,962	11,839
		1925	acres	15,190	3,849	7,468
	Colored	1930	acres	2,344	1,300	1,074
		1925	acres	1,076	911	88
Tenants	White	1930	acres	232,233	134,232	107,022
		1925	acres	280,794	140,132	116,941
	Colored	1930	acres	37,631	18,221	2,122
		1925	acres	37,232	19,009	1,800
Cash tenants	White	1930	acres	32,256	7,807	19,042
		1925	acres	28,783	4,882	16,844
	Colored	1930	acres	2,603	1,337	672
		1925	acres	1,126	497	157
Croppers	White	1930	acres	16,489	4,646	4,070
		1925	acres	7,806	1,793	3,073
	Colored	1930	acres	4,445	1,498	7
		1925	acres	3,888	1,448	303
Other tenants	White	1930	acres	304,488	122,079	83,910
		1925	acres	346,225	132,754	97,019
	Colored	1930	acres	30,783	15,386	1,442
		1925	acres	32,228	17,064	1,633

Of all farm operators, one-half owned their farms in both counties in 1930 (Table 69). In contrast, however, only 38% of the African American farm operators owned farms in Kent County. In New Castle, almost two-thirds of the African American farm operators owned farms; however African American farm operators numbered a mere 75 individuals. Thus there were more African American farm owners in Kent County than owners, part owners, managers, and tenants in New Castle County. African Americans controlled only 8% of Kent's farm acreage through ownership, management, or tenancy; in New Castle they owned or tenanted a mere 2% of the farmland. Moreover, the farmland and buildings controlled by African American farm operators in Kent County in 1930 were appraised at less than 7% the value of those owned by European American farm operators; in New Castle County the figure was less than 1% (Table 70). Consideration of farm implements and machinery ownership even further magnifies the marginal position of African Americans in agriculture in both counties. African American farm operators in Kent owned only 4% of the county's farm equipment by value; in New Castle African Americans owned less than 1%. African American tenant farmers in Kent, for example, owned \$46,165 in farm machinery and other implements; this compared to \$759,887 for European American tenants, and to \$1,840 for African American tenant farmers in New Castle County.

The 1930 census also reported the tenure of the different types of farms: General, Cash-grain, Crop-specialty, Fruit, Truck, Dairy, Animal-specialty, Poultry, Self-sufficing, and Abnormal (principally Part-time) (Table 71). The proportions of owner-operated and tenanted Poultry and Self-sufficing farms were similar in New Castle and Kent counties, although Kent contained more than twice the number of Poultry farms. Owners operated their own farms in 80% of the cases in New Castle and in 82% of the cases in Kent; in both counties 16% of the Poultry farms were tenanted. In both counties, 78% of the Self-sufficing farms were owner-occupied, and 20% (Kent) to 22% (New Castle) tenanted. The proportions of owner-operated and tenanted Dairy and General farms were also similar in the two counties, but different than the pattern of occupancy for Poultry and Self-sufficing farms. More than one-half of the Dairy farms were operated by their owners (53% New Castle, 56% Kent), and 41% tenanted. Just about one-half of the General farms were also owner-operated (48% New Castle, 50% Kent), and 46% tenanted.

Crop-specialty farms were not numerous in either county. Their patterns of occupancy diverged nevertheless (Table 71). Ninety-six percent of them were operated by their owners in New Castle, compared to only 46% in Kent. Almost two-thirds of the 223 Fruit farms in Kent County and of the 8 Fruit farms in New Castle were owner-operated; almost one-quarter of those in Kent were tenanted, compared to half that proportion in New Castle. Farmers worked their own Truck and Animal-specialty farms in between one-half and two-thirds of the cases, and approximately one-third, fewer in New Castle and more in Kent, were rented. Tenancy

TABLE 70  
FARM VALUES BY TENURE, NEW CASTLE AND KENT COUNTIES, 1930  
(Source: U.S. Bureau of Census 1932: 121)

ITEM				THE STATE	Kent	New Castle
Value, by color of farm operator:						
Land and buildings	White	1930	dollars	64,313,157	16,369,010	28,478,133
		1925	dollars	61,570,136	20,773,097	20,961,937
	Colored	1930	dollars	2,623,590	1,101,363	404,925
		1925	dollars	2,583,445	1,419,610	303,850
Value of land and buildings, total						
		1930	dollars	66,941,747	17,470,373	28,883,063
		1925	dollars	64,153,571	22,192,707	21,265,787
Full owners						
	White	1930	dollars	35,834,447	8,303,317	14,930,261
		1925	dollars	29,499,735	8,565,135	8,637,727
	Colored	1930	dollars	682,040	248,190	125,950
		1925	dollars	679,655	316,273	96,000
Part owners						
	White	1930	dollars	2,927,344	619,844	1,148,142
		1925	dollars	717,875	208,000	194,600
	Colored	1930	dollars	162,200	24,150	
		1925	dollars	41,400	11,500	11,200
Managers						
	White	1930	dollars	4,917,987	539,100	3,567,727
		1925	dollars	2,644,920	379,000	1,815,920
	Colored	1930	dollars	334,675	108,678	108,000
		1925	dollars	161,000	127,000	6,000
Tenants						
	White	1930	dollars	20,643,377	6,886,749	8,832,008
		1925	dollars	24,181,391	7,398,768	10,341,380
	Colored	1930	dollars	1,509,673	722,350	90,973
		1925	dollars	1,767,670	980,125	108,140
Cash tenants						
	White	1930	dollars	3,687,015	306,300	3,038,615
		1925	dollars	2,420,940	221,150	2,910,930
	Colored	1930	dollars	99,225	60,450	25,525
		1925	dollars	68,325	22,500	15,000
Croppers						
	White	1930	dollars	947,625	244,200	318,200
		1925	dollars	529,330	131,000	238,500
	Colored	1930	dollars	187,750	60,000	350
		1925	dollars	222,900	96,000	20,000
Other tenants						
	White	1930	dollars	16,006,737	6,274,249	5,455,193
		1925	dollars	20,211,101	7,346,618	7,211,950
	Colored	1930	dollars	1,222,700	611,900	65,100
		1925	dollars	1,478,545	832,825	73,540
Value of implements and machinery, total						
		1930	dollars	7,283,130	2,233,386	2,016,374
Full owners						
	White	1930	dollars	4,365,030	1,220,234	1,109,156
		1925	dollars	77,780	22,800	10,380
Part owners						
	White	1930	dollars	381,935	96,925	70,215
		1925	dollars	22,945	3,135	
Managers						
	White	1930	dollars	234,811	69,300	92,211
		1925	dollars	16,190	6,940	5,500
Tenants						
	White	1930	dollars	2,079,324	739,887	727,052
		1925	dollars	107,075	46,165	1,840
	Colored	1930	dollars	239,032	34,102	182,805
		1925	dollars	5,180	2,650	320
Cash tenants						
	White	1930	dollars	83,919	24,080	26,614
		1925	dollars	13,265	5,140	40
Croppers						
	White	1930	dollars	1,731,373	701,705	537,633
		1925	dollars	68,630	25,275	1,480
Other tenants						
	White	1930	dollars			
		1925	dollars			
	Colored	1930	dollars			
		1925	dollars			

TABLE 71  
FARM TENURE BY FARM TYPE, NEW CASTLE AND KENT COUNTIES, 1930  
(Source: U.S. Bureau of Census 1932: 77)

TYPE, BY TENURE OF OPERATOR (See definitions in Introduction)	THE STATE	Kent	New Castle	TYPE, BY TENURE OF OPERATOR (See definitions in Introduction)	THE STATE	Kent	New Castle
<b>General farms:</b>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Number</i>	<b>Dairy farms:</b>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Number</i>
Full owners.....	1,571	608	245	Full owners.....	372	109	200
Part owners.....	164	34	9	Part owners.....	22	3	10
Managers.....	32	9	19	Managers.....	19	2	16
Tenants—				Tenants—			
Cash.....	91	27	42	Cash.....	77	5	72
Croppers.....	49	18	6	Croppers.....	11	5	4
Other.....	1,043	523	185	Other.....	165	69	78
<b>Cash-grain farms:</b>				<b>Animal-specialty farms:</b>			
Full owners.....	123	41	41	Full owners.....	25	8	10
Part owners.....	6	2	2	Part owners.....	2		1
Managers.....	15	3	10	Managers.....	3		3
Tenants—				Tenants—			
Cash.....	15	1	10	Cash.....	2	1	1
Croppers.....	22	6	9	Croppers.....	1		1
Other.....	234	122	88	Other.....	4	3	1
<b>Crop-specialty farms:</b>				<b>Poultry farms:</b>			
Full owners.....	219	29	25	Full owners.....	1,631	267	79
Part owners.....	9	2	1	Part owners.....	107	5	2
Managers.....	5	1		Managers.....	5	1	2
Tenants—				Tenants—			
Cash.....	10	5		Cash.....	65	24	9
Croppers.....	15	1		Croppers.....	16	4	1
Other.....	163	25		Other.....	173	23	6
<b>Fruit farms:</b>				<b>Self-sufficing farms:</b>			
Full owners.....	352	142	5	Full owners.....	482	149	107
Part owners.....	31	14		Part owners.....	17	3	
Managers.....	31	15	2	Tenants—			
Tenants—				Cash.....	38	12	18
Cash.....	8	1		Croppers.....	12	2	1
Croppers.....	19	5		Other.....	127	26	11
Other.....	120	46	1	<b>Abnormal and unclassified farms:</b>			
<b>Truck farms:</b>				Full owners.....	590	157	246
Full owners.....	451	87	46	Part owners.....	27	4	11
Part owners.....	59	8	4	Managers.....	47	8	31
Managers.....	8	3	2	Tenants—			
Tenants—				Cash.....	157	45	79
Cash.....	31	9	8	Croppers.....	34	5	2
Croppers.....	46	3	2	Other.....	262	99	63
Other.....	272	45	12				



predominated only on the Cash-grain farms of the wheat belt in southern New Castle and northern Kent counties. In New Castle, three-quarters of the grain farms were rented to tenants, along with more than two-thirds of those in Kent. Only approximately one-quarter were owner-operated in either county.

In studying agriculture in New Castle and Kent counties in the mid-1930s, Bausman did consider certain of the "social aspects of land use" (Bausman 1941: 49). In particular, his interests lay in the relationship between social factors and occupation of the four classes of agricultural land he defined (Class I: poorest for agriculture, mostly marsh and wooded; Class II: open untillable or marginally tillable land; Class III: crop land; Class IV: best for agriculture, intensively cropped) (Bausman 1941: 27-28; see also 1880-1940: **Agricultural Production**).

The first factor Bausman considered was farmers' ages. In New Castle, farmers on Class IV land were distributed evenly between the ages of 30 and 69. One-third of the farmers on Class III land were in their 50s; over 40% of those on Class II land were in their 40s; and almost one-half of those on the poorest land were over 60 years old. In Kent, over one-half of the farmers on the best land were between 40 and 59; those on Class III land were mostly between the ages of 40 and 69; almost one-half of those on the poorer land were over 60 years old (Bausman 1940: 71; Bausman 1941: 50). Family size also varied among farmers living on the different classes of land, and between the counties. In New Castle, farming families on the poorer lands averaged between 3 and 4 children, while those on the better classes of land bore an average of one less child. In Kent, family sizes were larger among farmers on the most productive lands, averaging between 3 and 4 children per family. Families living on the poorest lands were smallest, with an average of about 3 children (Bausman 1940: 76; Bausman 1941: 55). The education these children received also depended on the county and class of land on which they resided. In New Castle County, about one-half of the children living on land classified I-III left school by age 15, over 10% more than the percentage of children from Class IV farms who left at the same ages. Most Kent County children from farms on Class II land left school before age 16 (82% were no longer in school before they reached their 17th birthday); in contrast, more than one-third of the children from farms on better quality lands were still in school when they turned 17 (Bausman 1940: 77; Bausman 1941: 56). Farmers on more marginal lands could not afford to lose the labor of their children any longer than the law required and may not have placed as great a value upon formal education as their more economically successful neighbors.

The origins of the families farming lands of different quality also differed. In New Castle, almost two-thirds of the farmers on the best crop lands had been born in rural New Castle County, and many presumably inherited the family farm (see also Bausman 1933).

In contrast, almost one-third of the farmers on the poorest land moved to New Castle from other states, and almost another one-quarter had immigrated from outside the United States. The pattern was even more exaggerated in Kent. There, almost three-quarters of the farmers on the best land had been born in the county, while almost one-half of those on the poorer lands had immigrated from other states and almost one-quarter had immigrated from other countries (Bausman 1940: 52; Bausman 1941: 72). By the mid-1930s, and probably considerably earlier, opportunities for acquiring the best agricultural lands and thus attaining a position among the more successful farmers were virtually closed for African Americans (as seen above), the foreign born, and to a lesser extent, immigrants from outside the county. European American families had entrenched themselves on the best land over the preceding generations, and family continuity perpetuated the social relations of agriculture.

By 1940, census takers reported that New Castle's "rural-farm" population contained about 9,550 individuals, and Kent's almost 13,000 (Table 72). The proportions of the two counties' native born, foreign born, and African American agriculturalists varied. In New Castle, African Americans accounted for 8.5% of the farm population, immigrants only another 4.7%. Sixteen percent of Kent's "rural-farm" population that year were African Americans, only 3.5% immigrants. In both counties, families were prolific. Almost 40% of both counties' "rural-farm" population were aged under 19. In Kent, most of the farming population over 25 years of age left school at the end of eighth grade. A fairly large number completed one to three years of high school, however, yet an even larger number left school before the fifth grade. The situation was similar in New Castle County, except that more farmers completed high school.

In New Castle County in 1940, just over one-half of the inhabitants engaged in agriculture owned or tenanted farms (55% compared to 37% ten years earlier), while another one-third earned their living working for wages on others' farms (compared to 60% in 1930) (Table 72). In Kent, close to two-thirds of the agriculturalists owned or tenanted farms (62% compared to 54% a decade earlier), and a correspondingly smaller proportion (one-quarter as opposed to 45% in 1930) worked as wage laborers. Further, unlike 1930, when women owned or tenanted farms in about equal numbers in the two counties, and female farm wageworkers were more than three times as numerous in Kent County, in 1940 female farm owners and tenants were three times more numerous in New Castle County.

In the decade between 1930 and 1940, tenancy declined in both counties, as it had in the preceding decade as well (to 35% in New Castle, 39% in Kent) (Table 73). The 1940 census distinguished four types of tenancy arrangements: Cash, Share-cash, Share tenants and Croppers, and Other. Sharecropping, which had been the

TABLE 72

FARM POPULATION, NEW CASTLE AND KENT COUNTIES, 1940  
(Source: U.S. Bureau of Census 1943: 930)

SUBJECT	Kent	New Castle
Total rural-farm population	12,978	9,558
Native white	10,405	8,297
Male	5,577	4,498
Female	4,828	3,825
Foreign-born white	449	452
Male	235	245
Female	214	207
Negro	2,124	818
Male	1,179	537
Female	945	281
Other races	-	1
AGE		
Male, all ages	6,391	5,244
Under 5 years	560	359
5 to 9 years	604	381
10 to 14 years	700	484
15 to 19 years	770	640
20 to 24 years	605	460
25 to 29 years	480	382
30 to 34 years	407	325
35 to 39 years	401	290
40 to 44 years	380	252
45 to 49 years	422	334
50 to 54 years	414	346
55 to 59 years	349	260
60 to 64 years	337	241
65 to 69 years	256	213
70 to 74 years	173	132
75 years and over	163	105
21 years and over	4,219	3,290
Female, all ages	5,987	4,314
Under 5 years	573	287
5 to 9 years	598	349
10 to 14 years	636	410
15 to 19 years	596	448
20 to 24 years	462	355
25 to 29 years	377	296
30 to 34 years	325	284
35 to 39 years	342	279
40 to 44 years	350	275
45 to 49 years	366	296
50 to 54 years	373	287
55 to 59 years	307	204
60 to 64 years	244	191
65 to 69 years	186	156
70 to 74 years	107	100
75 years and over	125	108
21 years and over	3,472	2,735
YEARS OF SCHOOL COMPLETED		
Persons 25 years old and over	6,874	5,390
No school years completed	220	167
Grade school: 1 to 4 years	999	608
5 or 6 years	1,451	715
7 or 8 years	2,441	1,966

SUBJECT	Kent	New Castle
YEARS OF SCHOOL COMPLETED—Con.		
High school: 1 to 3 years	938	815
4 years	409	656
College: 1 to 3 years	196	173
4 years or more	120	206
Not reported	80	109
Median yrs. completed (omitted if base under 100)	7.6	8.2
EMPLOYMENT STATUS		
Male, 14 years old and over	5,287	4,126
In labor force	4,488	3,326
Employed (except on public emergency work)	4,271	3,165
On public emergency work (WPA, NYA, etc.)	95	21
Seeking work	122	160
Not in labor force	799	810
Female, 14 years old and over	4,295	3,356
In labor force	588	679
Employed (except on public emergency work)	580	633
On public emergency work (WPA, NYA, etc.)	12	4
Seeking work	56	46
Not in labor force	3,707	2,677
Male, employed (exc. public emerg. work)	4,271	3,165
Professional workers	22	64
Semiprofessional workers	5	25
Farmers and farm managers	2,198	1,112
Proprietors, managers, and officials, except farm	89	103
Clerical, sales, and kindred workers	61	121
Craftsmen, foremen, and kindred workers	168	241
Operatives and kindred workers	187	246
Domestic service workers	4	46
Service workers, except domestic	18	29
Farm laborers (wage workers) and farm foremen	861	788
Farm laborers, unpaid family workers	494	171
Laborers, except farm	147	178
Occupation not reported	17	31
Female, employed (exc. public emerg. work)	520	633
Professional workers	13	41
Semiprofessional workers	3	10
Farmers and farm managers	26	76
Proprietors, managers, and officials, except farm	5	10
Clerical, sales, and kindred workers	97	129
Craftsmen, foremen, and kindred workers	3	4
Operatives and kindred workers	102	37
Domestic service workers	146	244
Service workers, except domestic	30	43
Farm laborers (wage workers) and farm foremen	5	4
Farm laborers, unpaid family workers	15	18
Laborers, except farm	28	3
Occupation not reported	12	12

FARMS AND FARM VALUE, BY TENURE, NEW CASTLE & KENT COUNTIES, 1940  
(Source: U.S. Bureau of Census 1942: 17)

ITEM	THE STATE	Kent	New Castle
<b>Number of farms:</b>			
Full owners.....number.....1940..	5,401	1,571	944
.....1935..	5,104	1,531	908
.....1930..	5,815	1,597	1,004
Part owners.....number.....1940..	585	81	57
.....1935..	451	71	48
.....1930..	444	75	40
Managers.....number.....1940..	108	26	27
.....1935..	158	40	84
.....1930..	165	42	85
All tenants.....number.....1940..	2,839	1,088	339
.....1935..	3,510	1,229	700
.....1930..	3,292	1,150	710
Proportion of tenancy.....percent.....1940..	32.5	38.9	35.2
.....1935..	34.8	42.8	40.8
.....1930..	33.8	40.4	38.6
Cash tenants.....number.....1940..	323	175	177
Share-cash tenants.....number.....1940..	24	7	2
Share tenants and croppers.....number.....1940..	1,951	706	305
Other tenants.....number.....1940..	421	118	75
<b>All land in farms:</b>			
Full owners.....acres.....1940..	436,400	135,317	85,615
.....1935..	437,572	120,905	75,005
.....1930..	77,973	12,582	10,094
Part owners.....acres.....1940..	43,254	10,447	5,308
.....1935..	52,354	7,215	5,791
.....1930..	28,048	7,051	3,339
Portion rented from others.....acres.....1940..	25,619	5,377	4,503
.....1935..	14,507	3,385	2,149
.....1930..	24,539	8,704	7,020
Managers.....acres.....1940..	32,014	7,280	15,412
.....1935..	304,565	145,099	88,053
.....1930..	409,408	195,070	109,928
Cash tenants.....acres.....1940..	37,520	11,035	15,821
Share-cash tenants.....acres.....1940..	2,380	737	64,904
Share tenants and croppers.....acres.....1940..	273,410	120,404	8,928
Other tenants.....acres.....1940..	41,457	13,817	8,928
<b>Cropland harvested, 1939:</b>			
Full owners.....acres.....	176,640	57,688	32,415
Part owners.....acres.....	38,738	5,778	4,367
Managers.....acres.....	13,308	3,327	2,828
All tenants.....acres.....	153,701	59,948	45,291
Cash tenants.....acres.....	13,328	2,597	5,741
Share-cash tenants.....acres.....	915	205	34,284
Share tenants and croppers.....acres.....	135,007	55,174	3,288
Other tenants.....acres.....	15,551	4,572	3,288
<b>Value of farms (land and buildings):</b>			
Full owners.....dollars.....1940..	32,488,779	6,884,030	15,551,493
.....1935..	25,939,041	5,481,878	11,304,985
.....1930..	3,382,744	486,970	708,000
Part owners.....dollars.....1940..	2,347,577	681,030	709,000
.....1935..	2,487,285	328,748	469,800
.....1930..	715,408	187,222	239,706
Managers.....dollars.....1940..	2,509,894	345,980	1,504,742
.....1935..	3,828,700	480,830	4,822,500
.....1930..	18,435,421	5,008,198	6,824,502
All tenants.....dollars.....1940..	17,460,410	5,538,775	7,848,645
.....1935..	3,094,022	461,405	2,125,486
.....1930..	137,950	28,700	3,840,715
Cash tenants.....dollars.....1940..	11,159,154	4,148,000	557,300
Share-cash tenants.....dollars.....1940..	2,034,305	480,003	800
Share tenants and croppers.....dollars.....1940..	5,305	1,037	1,354
Other tenants.....dollars.....1940..	17,083,457	3,898,381	8,401,354
.....1935..	547	78	57
.....1930..	1,510,320	238,070	332,525
Managers.....dollars.....1940..	108	24	25
.....1935..	1,257,255	135,600	672,976
.....1930..	2,882	1,000	592
All tenants.....dollars.....1940..	7,628,081	2,522,078	2,914,153
.....1935..	508	174	373
.....1930..	1,413,051	289,813	885,023
Cash tenants.....dollars.....1940..	24	7	2
Share-cash tenants.....dollars.....1940..	54,310	14,000	( <sup>1</sup> )
Share tenants and croppers.....dollars.....1940..	1,949	704	303
Other tenants.....dollars.....1940..	5,118,707	2,005,710	1,583,100
.....1935..	413	115	74
.....1930..	1,024,823	232,305	417,030
<b>Value of implements and machinery, 1940:</b>			
Full owners.....dollars.....	4,420	1,308	789
Part owners.....dollars.....	3,330,809	1,025,466	681,037
Managers.....dollars.....	53	15	17
All tenants.....dollars.....	183,951	31,125	61,029
Cash tenants.....dollars.....	2,070	728	488
Share-cash tenants.....dollars.....	1,082,304	534,835	707,285
Share tenants and croppers.....dollars.....	308	121	130
Other tenants.....dollars.....	234,547	37,808	123,304
.....1935..	15	7	1
.....1930..	12,889	5,800	( <sup>1</sup> )
Managers.....dollars.....	1,448	534	289
All tenants.....dollars.....	1,878,124	648,365	538,940
.....1935..	281	64	39
.....1930..	177,308	41,577	62,968

<sup>1</sup>Where less than 3 farms are reported, data are not shown.

arrangement of choice in Kent County for several decades, was replaced by a different, unspecified contractual relation between 1920 and 1930 (for 89% of the tenants). The same occurred in New Castle, although there almost one-third of the tenants continued to rent for a fixed rate. In 1940, however, according to the census, share tenants and croppers once again predominated (thus suggesting that the apparent transformation in the 1920s was in fact a function of the census categories and not the reality of changing relations of production among farm owners and tenants). Almost three-quarters of Kent County's tenant farmers that year were classified as Share tenants and Croppers, along with over one-half of those in New Castle County (Table 73).

Social and economic distinctions dividing New Castle and Kent counties' farm owners and tenants in 1940 are suggested by differences in the values of the land, buildings, and farm implements and machinery they owned and/or controlled (Table 73). New Castle farmers owned farms valued (\$16,474) an average of almost four times those of Kent farm owners' (\$4,433). New Castle's tenant farmers worked farms averaging several thousand dollars less in value (\$12,208), yet still much higher than the average value of an owner-operated farm in Kent County. In contrast, Kent tenant farms were valued higher (\$4,745 average value) than the county's owner-operated farms. The difference lay in land values, as the farm buildings on Kent's tenant farms were valued lower (\$2,379) than those on owner-operated farms (\$2,497). The buildings alone on New Castle's tenant farms had a higher average value (\$5,279) than the land and buildings on Kent's owner-operated farms. Buildings on the northern county's owner-operated farms held higher values yet, an average of \$8,985 per farm. This significant difference in farm values between the two counties extended also to the value of farm implements and machinery owned by their farmers and farm tenants. New Castle tenant farmers owned the most expensive farm equipment, valued at an average of \$1,449 per farm. This figure is probably inflated by the high incidence of tenancy on southern New Castle's large wheat farms. Owner-operators in New Castle owned equipment valued about \$300 less than tenant farmers. In Kent County, farm owners owned more valuable equipment (average value \$785) than tenants, but not by much (average value for tenant farmers \$736).

Farm owners and tenants were distinguished as well by their need to supplement their incomes through work off the farm, and by their average length of tenure on the farms they owned or rented (Table 74). In both New Castle and Kent counties in 1939, about one-quarter of the farm operators spent some of their time working off of their farms. In both counties, interestingly, owners worked more days off their farms than tenant farmers. The owners in New Castle County had acquired their farms an average of 16 years prior to the taking of the 1940 census, Kent farmers on average one year

TABLE 74

FARMERS, NEW CASTLE AND KENT COUNTIES, 1940  
(Source: U.S. Bureau of Census 1942: 25)

ITEM	THE STATE	Kent	New Castle
Work off farm for pay or income:			
Operators reporting work off their farms.....	1,940	628	422
Proportion of all farm operators.....	2,159	612	420
Days worked off farm in 1939.....	21.6	22.9	20.6
Average for.....	17.8	17.8	22.8
Days worked off farm in 1939.....	304,878	92,190	83,873
Average for.....	107	107	100
White operators reporting.....	181	101	201
Nonwhite operators.....	122	121	167
Full owners.....	173	107	210
Part owners.....	103	87	118
All tenants.....	135	133	179
Operators reporting.....	406	109	70
Under 50 days.....	173	91	44
50 to 99 days.....	1,209	308	308
100 days and over.....			
Operators reporting work on other farms (see text).....	521	189	87
Operators reporting nonfarm work (see text).....	41,717	13,651	7,629
Operators reporting "None" for days worked off farm in 1939.....	80	72	91
Operators not reporting for 1939 (see text).....	1,472	457	340
Age of farm operators reported, Apr. 1, 1940:	283,161	78,639	75,944
Average age of.....	170	172	223
Operators reporting "None" for days worked off farm in 1939.....	6,299	1,693	923
Operators not reporting for 1939 (see text).....	1,705	431	242
Age of farm operators reported, Apr. 1, 1940:			
Average age of.....	50.5	50.4	52.1
White operators.....	50.9	51.5	53.7
Nonwhite operators.....	54.0	54.7	54.7
Full owners.....	48.6	48.9	51.1
Part owners.....	40.4	40.2	49.9
Managers.....	44.9	44.3	48.0
All tenants.....			
Year of occupancy reported, Apr. 1, 1940:			
Average for.....	1927	1928	1928
All farm operators reporting.....	1926	1928	1928
White operators.....	1927	1928	1928
Nonwhite operators.....	1924	1924	1924
Full owners.....	1923	1923	1923
Part owners.....	1924	1925	1925
Managers.....	1934	1931	1934
All tenants.....	1933	1934	1933
Residence of farm operator, Apr. 1, 1940:			
On the farm operated.....	8,091	2,619	1,401
Not on the farm operated.....	342	67	53

<sup>1</sup> Includes Mexicans.

<sup>2</sup> Where there are less than 3 farms reporting, data are not shown.

later. New Castle tenants, in contrast, had been on the farms they were renting in 1940 on average only since 1934; in Kent, tenants maintained somewhat more stable relationships with owners.

Agricultural organizations such as the Delaware State Grange and other special interest organizations formed by its members served important social and educational as well as economic roles in the lives of Delaware's farmers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Historians of the Grange have documented its functions and activities and those of affiliated organizations between 1880 and 1940. One of the first "off-shoots" of the Grange, for example, the Delaware Fruit Exchange was chartered in 1883 and proved a "notable success." Co-operative purchasing of "supplies, food, even clothing" by Grange members also began early in this period, and continued for many years (Passmore 1975: 29). Moreover, the Grange served as a conduit of information exchange on agricultural practices and innovations, domestic economy, scientific developments, legislation, and markets and prices, through the meetings of its Subordinates and its publications, "The Delaware Farm and Home" (1885-1902) and later the "Diamond State Granger" (Passmore 1975: 79-81). With the establishment of the Juvenile Granges and the Boys and Girls Clubs, the forerunners of 4-H Clubs, Delaware's farmers began to supplement their at-home training and socialization of their children (Passmore 1975: 125) into the "culture of agriculture."

Staff of the U. S. Census Bureau and other scholars have traced the outlines of the sociocultural context of agriculture in New Castle and Kent counties between 1880 and 1940. Their work has demonstrated the central roles of ethnicity, gender, land quality, geographical locations, and status as farm owner, tenant, or laborer in the lives of the counties' farmers and in determining the nature of the relationships among the several sociocultural groups constituting the social order of agriculture. Land tenure, ethnicity, and land quality have been explored in the greatest depth, while there remains much to learn regarding the social geography of agriculture (at a scale smaller than the county), gender, the actual social and class relationships that existed among farm owners, landlords, their tenants, and the laborers working others' farms. Even the research on these topics has not been exhaustive, however; Amish and Jewish farmers moved into Kent County during this period, for example, and their stories remain to be told. Areas such as formal and informal agricultural organizations, education, religion, family strategies, politics, neighborhood and community, and the social relationships among the agricultural producers and the urban and industrial consumers of their produce also need attention.

Analysis of probate records, individual farm accounts, and other personal and business papers, along with a program of oral history research, would provide especially significant information. As noted in the discussion of Agricultural Production and expanded

on in the chapter on Goals, much potentially important information remains in the private collections and in the memories of Delaware's farming families. An expanded program involving Delawareans in studying and preserving their agricultural heritage would have many benefits. Study of the publications and records of the Delaware State Grange and its affiliated organizations would also enrich our understanding of the many complex sociocultural factors affecting and in turn influenced by agricultural production and the agricultural economy. The manuscript and published records of federal agencies, also outlined above in the discussion of **Agricultural Production**, offer great promise for expanding the sociocultural context of Delaware agriculture and farm life in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. An especially rich collection of federal records documents the effects of the Depression on the nation's farming families. Photographs in the collections of the Historical Society of Delaware, the Delaware State Archives, and the families of New Castle and Kent County farmers, surviving farm buildings and landscapes, and the collections of the Delaware Museum of Agriculture will assist in developing further the social context of agriculture and its material expressions.

As with study of agricultural production, information on the histories of individual farms and their occupants is also required; few archaeological studies of New Castle and Kent farms of this period have focused on the sociocultural context of the families (see Catts and Custer 1990; Coleman et al. 1984; Hoseth et al. 1990). Such archaeological studies, which take advantage of available historical documentation, surviving material culture, and the archaeological record, can reveal household demographics, occupational structures, economic strategies, social positions, community contexts and involvement, education, ethnic identifications, religious affiliations, the roles of religious, social, and economic ideologies in family life and decision-making, and the uses and meanings of material culture in these families' lives.

Researchers at the University of Delaware Center for Historic Architecture and Engineering and others have documented much of the surviving agricultural architecture and landscape of this period, but have not as yet proceeded far in the complex task of unraveling the many social and utilitarian functions and meanings of these buildings and landscapes. Such syntheses and interpretations will complement those resulting from archaeologists' studies of the "culture of agriculture" and its material expressions and constraints.